attached to the top end. Down the middle of the moon, fastened firmly to it at each end, is another string, to which the klipspringer's favorite food is attached. The trap is set when the thin end of the branch is bent down to about 1/2 a meter above the ground. The branch and the moon are tied together with a sinew string that must be especially strong as it must take the entire pull of the branch and later has to hold the caught animal. The moon is held flat on the ground by four short pegs. The klipspringer pulls up the pegs as soon as he tugs at the middle string of the moon. The branch jerks up, pulling the moon over the animal's neck and raises it into the air. It is then hanged as though on a gallows. 224

Spring traps, //ne̋-aga, are used for catching porcupines and smaller mammals, such as mice, which are a popular food of the Bergdamaras. The setting and springing mechanism is more complicated than in the above-mentioned traps. A flat stone (a) is leaned at an angle against a bracing stick (b). This stick rests lightly on the ground. On the outermost edge of the top of the stone a wedge (c) is inserted between the stick and the stone. A little horizontal stick tipped slightly upwards (d) gives the slanted brace support on the side. One end of it is placed securely under the edge of the stone, the other extends beyond the brace. [196] The brace and the horizontal stick are pressed against each other by the !a-n(a)das- wood (e). This small piece of wood is kept in place by a taut sinew string that is tied to the wedge. [Picture, Spring trap. a) stone, b) brace, c) wedge, d) horizontal stick, e) !a-n(a)das- wood. f) bait.] As soon as the horizontal stick is knocked down by the animal getting the bait (f), the side support is removed from the brace, at the same time the !a-n(a)das- wood slips out and disturbs the precarious balance of the whole structure by moving the string on the wedge. The Bergdamaras call the little pieces of wood that are used for making spring traps °/hâ/n-a.

Capitulum IV

Social Life

A. Family

1. Establishing a Family

a) The reaching of marriageable age, when menstruation first occurs, kxara-b or /ha/ha-b, is a joyful occasion and, as the first pledge of future

family happiness, is celebrated accordingly. The girl is separated from the other inhabitants of the hut by a mat wall. She puts on her jewels, relatives and friends bring her arm rings and put chains of beads around her neck. Some of them are kept as presents. The parents slaughter and serve honey beer to the guests.

[106] Before the Hottentots adopted European clothing the girl exchanged her girl's apron for that of an adult; this custom has been abandoned. But another custom has still been maintained here and there where it could be concealed from the watchfulness of the mission. Males from the smallest child to the aging man (old men are excused) have their scrotum rubbed with buchu powder as a preventative for venereal disease by the girl menstruating for the first time. The practice of this custom is called °/ua-tsâ!ka/n-, (/kaa/a-) = the testicles, °/ua-n is the gentle word of the cow's udder, the call of which is dead. It is supposed to have the effect of persuading the cow to give milk. The scrotum is rubbed just as gently with powder.)

When the first menstruation has ended, the girl is washed by a woman from head to foot with wet cow manure (sheep manure is better) which has been stirred to a thick porridge with a little milk. (cf. Care of the Body, p. 307). This stuff is smeared on the body in the usual way and rubbed in. It dries quickly on the warm skin and at the completion of the cleansing falls off of its own accord.

Thus cleansed, the girl comes out of the separate room of the hut. This coming forth of the girl, °/ûs'nâbi (/ûs'n is the special term for the above-described method of cleansing with manure. /n-i = to go out) is the visible sign to all the inhabitants that the girl has reached marriageable age. Up to the time of the first menstrual period the girl is considered a child, /ge'es. But from that time until she is married she is called ǂaoan (see below (57)).

Cf. J. G. Kuwalein, Warnebuch der Khoi-Khoin, Berlin, 1880.

The vanity of the girls is often employed to furthering the development of their charms. The areola of the nipple is hard at the beginning of puberty. A slightly serumy liquid can be squeezed out of the nipple with sufficient pressure. When the breasts are just beginning to develop, and the area around the nipples becomes firm, the girls squeeze out this liquid assiduously to further development of the breasts. The liquid that can be pressed out of the mammary glands at the time of the beginning of puberty is called °/ûp'-nerûseb.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

family surname. That of the *|Gori |Nagunun*, for example, is Swartbooi, and that of the *|Naisi Ein*, another of the Swartbooi clans, is Booken. Other clans have several of these surnames, e.g. those of the *|Gurusin* clan of the same tribe are Swartbooi, Gertze, Richter, and Van der Bijl, and little genealogical connection can now be traced between the different family groups bearing these names. Members of the same clan, however, all considered themselves blood relatives, and were bound together by various common rules and observances. Marriage within the clan was strongly forbidden, so that a man had to seek his wife in another clan. The children belonged to the clan of their father. Apart from thus controlling marriage and regulating descent, and with it inheritance and succession, the clan seems to have functioned mainly as a political unit. There is no record of any ceremonial observances and taboos specially connected with the clan organization, nor was there anything in the nature of totemism among the Hottentots. The members of a clan all tended to live together, and membership of a clan guaranteed a person a strong measure of protection. He could always count on the support of his fellow-clansmen, especially in the case of blood feud. Early last century the vendetta system was still in force among the Namas, even between clans of the same tribe, and the chief of the tribe was unable to prevent two clans from carrying out blood vengeance on each other, or to force them to accept compensation.

The clan was thus the strongest unit ever attained by the Namas. Time and again a powerful clan would go off on its own, asserting its independence of the others, and clan loyalty was always stronger than tribal loyalty. The chief of the tribe was little more than *primus inter pares*. He was acknowledged to be the head of the senior clan, and if a man of fine character was accorded a great deal of respect; but the heads of the other clans sitted as his council, and he could not do much without their co-operation. The whole conduct of affairs in the tribe was—and still is—the concern of the older men.

The clan structure of the Swartbooie as analysed by Mrs. Hoernlé shows the whole mechanism by which clans and tribes were formed among the Namas. A large and flourishing family would very often have its own favourite pasturing grounds, and be so large as to exclude members of other families or clans. In course of time they would become sufficient unto themselves, and the headmen begin to play the part of a chief. They would arrange migrations to suit themselves independently of the other members of the tribe, and ultimately be

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1939
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

of the camp, and thus received the stamp of publicity and recognized usage.[1] Nowadays the restrictions on premarital intercourse are more loosely observed, and the lovers are apparently not punished. Schultze even goes so far as to say that boys and girls often have sexual intercourse while they are still playing children's games, and no special notice of this is taken by their elders.[2] Should pregnancy follow, however, the father of the child is expected to marry the mother. Even if he does not do so, he is responsible for the sustenance of the child while it is being weaned, and has to provide the mother with some cattle or money for this purpose. If he refuses, he is taken before the tribal council and compelled to do so, and may even be flogged. The payments cease when the child has been weaned. It then belongs to the father, and may be taken away by him. Premarital children are said to have the same rights of inheritance from their father as those born in wedlock.[3]

Rape is severely penalized. If the victim is a child, the violator, according to Wanders, suffers the death penalty; if she is a virgin, or even a girl who had previously been deflowered, he is thrashed and all his property confiscated; while if she is a married woman her husband has the right to kill him without fear of retaliation. Incest, between either parents and children, brother and sister, or even the children of brothers and sisters ("Geschwister") is punished by death.[4]

The occurrence of homosexuality among the Hottentots is denied by both Wanders and Fritsch.[5] Kurt Falk, however, maintains that it is fairly common, among both men and women, and especially among young married women.[6] There exists among the Naman a

[1] Schultze, *Das Hottentotland und Kububreet*, 198, 319; cf. Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten," 332.
[2] Op. cit., 319.
[3] Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten," 348; Wanders, "Ueber das Recht der Namas," 689; Vedder, "The Nama," 144, 146.
[4] Loc. cit. Intercourse between distant cousins, here said to be treated as incest, is now apparently no longer condemned, as at the present time they may even marry; while marriage between cross-cousins, also included by Wanders under his definition of incest, was always permitted. Kolb (op. cit., 73) also affirms that incest, by which he means especially intercourse between parents and children, is punished by death; while Hahn, commenting upon the myth relating how the hero-god Heitsi-Eibib committed incest with his mother, says: "The laws and customs of the Namaquas are against incest in any form. In the last thirty years only three cases, and those among the so-called Orlam tribes, have happened. Here, certainly, we have the fall of the savage with civilized races having proved fatal to the morals of the Aborigines. When these cases happened there was thoroughfare. Great Namaqualand a general outcry against the criminals; they were punished most severely, thrown out of society, and a gloom cast over the whole tribe to which they belonged" (*Transvaal Quarterly*, 173).
[5] Wanders, loc. cit.; Fritsch, in F. Ratzel-Hirsch, *Die geschlechtlichen Leben der Naturvölker* (1911), p. 133.
[6] "Homosexualität bei den Eingeborenen in Südwest-Afrika," *Geschlecht und Gesellschaft*, viii (1913-6), 209-20.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

Marriage

582 Normally a girl is not regarded as marriageable until she has reached the age of puberty and passed through the puberty ceremonies, nor was a boy in the old days permitted to marry before he had been initiated into the ranks of the adult men (a custom now fallen into abeyance). Marriage, as we have seen, might not take place between members of the same clan, nor was a man supposed to marry a woman of the same "great name" (*gui khoi /ons*) as himself, even though she might come from a tribe different from his own. Such a woman would be regarded as a mother, if much older, or as a daughter, if younger, than himself. Nowadays this prohibition has ceased to be observed; and we also find that marriage with any first cousin is permitted, even with direct cousins, although on the other hand, says Mrs. Hoernlé, the older people are resisting the marriages of first cousins at all, whether direct or cross-cousins. Marriage with the latter was formerly permitted, both with the father's sister's daughter and with the mother's brother's daughter, although in some of the Nama tribes (e.g. *//Haboben, Gei //Khauan, //Khau /Gwan*) marriage with the latter kind of cross-cousin is said to have been far more usual than marriage with the former kind. It does not seem, however, that marriage with the cross-cousins was specially enjoined. Marriage with the direct (ortho-) cousins, on the other hand, was strictly prohibited.[1]

There is no single account of Hottentot marriage customs which can be regarded as exhaustive. The following description, pieced together as it is from the more or less incomplete accounts of a number of different observers, must therefore be looked upon only as approximately correct, although the details cited are all vouched for by reliable witnesses.[2]

584 As a rule there is free choice with regard to marriage, subject, of course, to the restrictions just indicated. The initiative usually lies in the hands of the boy. When he has found a suitable girl, he seeks to obtain her formal consent. He will hand her a little stick; if she takes this, breaks it in two, and throws one of the pieces at his breast, it is a sign that she is willing to marry him. The two now enter into a state of betrothal, which imposes upon them various

[1] "Social Organisation of the Nama," 22.

[2] Hahn, "Die Nama-Hottentotten," 322; von François, *Nama und Damara*, 314; Olpp, *Among Pagans*, 26 sq.; Kohler, "Das Recht der Hottentotten," 343–5; Wanderer, "Die Khoi-Khoin," 318–19; Schultze, *Namaland und Kalahari*, 197–9; Vedder, "The Nama," 234–5.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

speak to her directly; if he wishes to communicate with her, he must ask another person to address her in his name, or in the absence of anybody he says aloud, so that she can hear: "I wish that somebody will tell my sister that I want a drink of milk," or whatever it is he wishes to communicate to her. He must never be alone with her in the hut, and he must never speak about her except in the most respectful terms. The eldest sister, especially, is his *gei ǂâiǂas*, his great respected one. The highest oath a man can take is to swear by her: *ni /gâo ao ǂa*, as true as my sister is alive. If he should abuse this oath, she can walk into his flock and take his finest cows and sheep. A sister can also be generally relied upon to stop any fight in which her brother is taking part. Even at the present time a man will not sleep in his sister's hut when visiting her as a married woman. One of the most offensive curses in Hottentot life, which will cause even the quietest man to fly into a passion, is *ao /gâos xoe*, commit incest with your sister.

This attitude towards the sister is obligatory also on all the men to whom she applies the relationship term */gâi*, brother, even if they are not her own brothers. Should one of these men use bad language in her presence, she can demand a sheep from him with which to purify herself of the pollution. Similarly a man must treat with respect all the women whom he calls "sister". It would in the old days have been a most heinous offence for a man to have married a woman standing in this relationship to him. "It is an indication," says Mrs. Hoernlé, "of the complete transformation of the organization of the people that has taken place owing to Christianization and European influence, that the marriage of direct cousins is now relatively frequent."[1]

Quite different is the behaviour of a man to those women of his own generation whom he calls *//nâvis*. They are his companions, his playmates; and all is possible with them, free speech and horseplay. Even sexual intercourse would not have been considered wrong. It was frequently one of these women that a man married in the old days.[2]

The relationship between brother and sister also affects the relations of children with their father's sister and mother's brother respectively. The attitude of a woman to her brother's children is one of great restraint; and, just as the father himself has to behave with much

[1] Hoernlé, op. cit., 22; Hahn, "Zur Kunde der Hottentotten," 51; *idem*, *Tsuni-//Goam*, 20-1; von François, op. cit., 212; Schultze, op. cit., 320.
[2] Hoernlé, loc. cit.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama
Cape Hottentots
Gonaqua

he took part with the other men of the kraal. Indeed, any man who touched a menstruating woman or anything belonging to her, or ate together with her or even came near her, was regarded as "extremely defiled", and obliged to purify himself before he could again mix freely with other men. It is to fear of such contamination, as we have seen, that Kolb ascribes the habitual separation of the sexes at meals.[1] Le Vaillant, again, states that among the Gonaqua a menstruating woman would isolate herself at some distance from the rest of the community until her period was over, when, purified by bathing, she could again mix with the people.[2] These descriptions are obviously incomplete, but they serve to show that the conception of *//nau* or taboo attaching to a menstruating woman among the Naman existed also to some degree at least, among the other Hottentot peoples.

Boys' Puberty Ceremonies

Although the Hottentots no longer observe any special rites connected with the attainment of maturity by boys, there is evidence enough in the literature that such rites existed in the past. Like the other Hottentot transition rites, they involved, among the Naman at least, a period of seclusion, with all its accompanying restrictions and final reintroduction to the incidents of ordinary life. But they also embodied a definite course of instruction, in which certain customary usages and laws peculiarly applicable to men were impressed upon the initiates. These rites seem to have been essentially of an individual character, in that as a rule only one boy at a time was subjected to them. On occasion perhaps three or four boys might be found undergoing them simultaneously, but this was by no means regular or necessary. In this respect among others, therefore, the Hottentot puberty rites for boys differed fundamentally from those of the North-Western Bushmen, where, as we have seen, there must always be a group of boys being initiated together.

No man was allowed to marry until he had passed through these rites. They served directly to initiate him into the ranks of mature men, and above all conferred upon him the privilege of habitually associating, eating, and smoking with these men. Boys who had not undergone the rites ate only with the women, and were regarded as milksops. It is upon this aspect of the rites that Kolb lays emphasis

[1] Op. cit., 102–3 and *passim*; cf. (English trans.) *The Present State of the Cape of Good Hope*, I, 147, 206–7.
[2] *Voyage dans l'Afrique*, II, 40.

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913) 1923
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

not likely to do so as the custom of using Dutch surnames is increasing and the old Nama names are falling into disuse.

There is no name for the families which together go to form a sib. They are also called *//Aon //Nani*. These families to-day have Dutch, or at any rate European, surnames, and though they claim to be blood kinsmen and in former days would not have intermarried, it is not now possible to trace any genealogical connection between these families. All the members of the chief's sib call themselves Swartbooie, a name which seems to have been applied in the first instance to William Swartbooi whose Nama name, Haiseb, however, means the root of a special kind of acacia. In the */Gari ≠Kaeiɔ* sib we get the Hendricks as the chief family; in the */Gaiɔsin* sib there are at least four families, the Swartbooie, Gertzen, Richters, Van der Byls. The *//Naiqua* sib has three families represented to-day, the Davids, the Swartbooie, the Lindeqs. The *Kha Gaon* are the Petersens, whilst the *Goanoen's* are represented to-day by the Oriam family, the *//Khaw Tsaoaon* by the Kido and the Brands families, the */Gari Gein* by only one family, the *Mantbis*, and the *//Naisi ein* by the Beukes family.

The analysis of the sib structure of this tribe shows, I think, the whole mechanism by which sibs and tribes are formed among the Nama. A large and flourishing family will very often have its own favorite pasturing grounds and be so large as to exclude members of other families or sibs. In course of time they become sufficient unto themselves, and the headman begins to play the part of chief. They arrange their migrations to suit themselves independently of the other members of the tribe, and in course of time are acknowledged to be independent. Then, as the families increase, descendants of the different brothers group themselves together more closely and form sibs and sub-sibs. In this way a new tribe develops from a sib, or a part of a sib, of the parent tribe.

My information is most complete and definite in regard to the Swartbooie and the Topnaars, but, so far as it goes, the evidence from the other tribes is in complete agreement with the course of development outlined above. The Topnaar tribe is to-day divided into two sections. One of these lives far away to

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

The clan loyalty was very strong. Members of a clan all considered themselves to be blood relatives, and marriage in the clan was strictly forbidden. Nowadays, these rules are broken but the older men still shake their heads over the marriages of the younger generation.

Membership of a clan guaranteed to a person a very strong measure of protection, for he could always count on the support of his fellow clan members. We know from accounts left to us by travellers among the Nama in the early part of last century that at that time the vendetta was still in full force among them; that is, the chief was unable in the interests of the whole people to prevent two clans from carrying out revenge one on the other, or to force them to accept compensation. Sir James Alexander gives an account[5] of such a vendetta among the Bondelzwarts when he was travelling among them in 1836, and in the Rhenish Mission Record for 1854 there is an account[6] of another vendetta at Bethany among the !Aman Hottentots.

Though the old camping order of the clan has long been given up, the order of camping of the families within the clan is still maintained in many instances, and could be studied among the Swartboois even in 1923. It has already been stated that among all the Hottentots all the sons of one woman are called by her big name, her *gei khoi* /oes, while all the daughters are similarly called after the *gei khoi* /oes of the father. In a settlement, therefore, we should expect to find the huts of a number of men called by the same name. This is exactly what we do find, and they are ranged in order of seniority, the eldest brother furthest to the right, the youngest furthest to the left, as we stand, facing outwards, at the doorway of any hut.

In the past the Hottentots were polygynists, but never to the same extent as the Bantu tribes around them. Nowadays they are ostensibly monogamists, but the standard of morals is extremely low among them. Each family has its own mat hut where the children remain until they marry. I have found a number of

[5] An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa, 2 vols., London, 1838; vol. I, p. 187; see also p. 211.

[6] *Loc. cit.*

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

son. In the feminine form, */Uis*, it applies to the wife's mother and the son's wife when a man is speaking. It applies to the husband's mother, the son's wife, the husband's sister, and the brother's wife when a woman is speaking. 601

The husbands of two sisters call each other */Gámirab* or */Gámab*. The wives of two brothers call each other */Gámas*.

/Gaoas is a term sometimes used for the son's wife when a man is speaking. It is a general term applied to women who have married into the sib.

Practically all the old regulations with regard to marriage have broken down among the Hottentots. Marriage with any first cousin is now permitted, though on the other hand the older people are enjoining the marriages of first cousins at all, whether direct or cross cousins. There is a difference here from tribe to tribe, some of them being more influenced by European contacts than others but the tendency in all is the same. All my older informants are agreed that the marriage of direct cousins was out of the question in the old days. With regard to the cross cousins there is some difference between the tribes. In some of them, e.g., the *//Hakaoa*, the *Gei //Khauan*, the *//Khau /Goan*, marriage with the mother's brother's daughter is said to have been far more usual than marriage with the father's sister's daughter. The terminology for these relatives seems however to show that in the past marriage with both the mother's brother's daughter and the father's sister's daughter was allowed, and the behavior towards these relatives confirms this. In addition, I have illustrations of both kinds of cross cousin marriage in genealogies. 582 • 177 184

The duties and privileges of relatives. The chief consideration in the behavior of Nama to one another is the relative ages of the people concerned. Respect for age is inculcated in every possible way, and the whole social organization of the people is an illustration of the fact. In the family deference and respect must always be paid to elders. Thus, of a number of brothers the eldest always has the honored place and the first voice in any debate. Family feeling is strong, however, and brothers generally hold together. The behavior proper to brothers is due to all those people called by the name "brother," and little difference is made by the fact 602 [791]

4: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

602 that they are often sons of fathers who are brothers and not sons
of one man. Similarly, all women who are called "sisters" must
602 be treated as sisters, and it would have been in the old days a most
582 heinous offense for a man to have married such a woman. It is
an indication of the complete transformation of the organization
of the people that has taken place owing to Christianization and
European influence, that the marriage of direct first cousins is now
relatively frequent. In the old days the behavior of a brother
602 and a sister was very strictly regulated. As tiny children they
513 ran about together, but once they were grown up, they had to
avoid one another completely. A brother was not allowed to
speak to a sister directly, he must never be alone with her in the
hut, he must never speak of her except in the most respectful
terms. A sister was a *têtse*, that is, a person to be respected, not
to be spoken to or of lightly. In the old days an oath by a sister
was one of the greatest oaths a man could take, and a sister could
generally be relied on to stop any fight in which her brother was
taking part. The brother is said to be shy (*sew*) in the presence of
his sister, and the same is true of all the men a woman would call
[513] brother. Should one of these men use bad language in her pre-
sence a woman could demand a sheep from him with which to
purify herself of the pollution. It is a *gri /Kois*, a great offense.
Even at the present day a man will not sleep in his sister's hut
when he visits her as a married woman. The eldest sister of a
man is his *Goi Têtse*, his great respected one.

602 Quite different is the behavior of a man to those of his own
582 generation whom he calls *//Nâsis*. These women are his com-
panions, his playmates. All is possible with them, free speech
and horse play. Even sexual intercourse would not have been
considered wrong. It was frequently one of these women that
a man married in the old days.

604 The relation of a woman to her brother's children was one of
great restraint. Just as the father himself had to behave with
much circumspection towards this woman, so his children had
to treat her with the greatest deference and respect.

The relation of a man to his sister's children was one of the
greatest indulgence and good will. A boy could do almost any-

4: Hoernlé E-8 (1912-1913) 1925
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

thing at his maternal uncle's *//Hâs*, or home, without being blamed for it. He could take, without asking, any of the specially fine animals among his uncle's herds, and the uncle had no redress but to take misformed ugly animals from his nephew's herds. This exchange was called *//nari //ae*, and it is still practiced by the Nama to-day. 604

The only other relationship calling for special notice is that of a man to his relatives by marriage. To his wife's sisters, a man behaved much as he would to his wife, and even at the present day intercourse with them is common, if they are unmarried or widowed. Such relations are the cause of much trouble. A woman considered her husband's younger brothers as her husbands, and used in the old days to be inherited by one of them. In the early missionary records there are numerous instances of a younger brother taking over his elder brother's widow.[2] This practice is, of course, strongly condemned by the missionaries who report these things, and it is interesting to note that the women seem to have taken advantage of the objection on the part of the missionaries to avoid this relationship in some instances. 607 [137] 607 587

His wife's mother had always to be treated with the greatest deference by a husband. They were said to be "shy" of one another, and the man might never look at her when speaking to her. There used in the past to be a special form of address between all relatives-in-law, the formal "You" being applied both to the mother-in-law, to the brothers of a man's wife, and to her father, but it is not so used nowadays. 606

In addition to the strict prohibition against marriage in the sib, a man was not allowed to marry a woman of the same great name as himself, even though she might come from a tribe different from his own. Such a woman would be regarded either as a mother if much older, or as a daughter if younger than the man. Nowadays, this prohibition, too, has ceased to be observed. I have instances in the genealogies, though not many, of such marriages having taken place. 582

[2] Cf. Rheinische Missions Berichte, 1856, p. 321; also same Berichte, 1860, p. 21.